

The ITUC and WSM's INSPIR Network are pleased to invite you to the following event:

**Financing Universal Social Protection:
Opportunities for Action at the National and International Levels**

23 January, online meeting

2.00 – 5.30 pm CET

To confirm your participation, **please register [here](#) by 18 January**, and you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Background

Social protection is essential to reduce and prevent poverty and vulnerability throughout the lifecycle, and is therefore embedded in international human rights frameworks. Numerous commitments from the international community have been agreed upon to support financing efforts to ensure comprehensive social protection systems that provide adequate support to all. Nevertheless, major financing gaps for social protection persist, with the ILO estimating that 1.2 trillion USD is needed to close the financing gap for low- and middle-income countries. Moreover, international financial support for social protection remains extremely low, particularly in the framework of Official Development Assistance (ODA). On average, less than 1% of ODA is invested in social protection, and with the economic crisis we are experiencing, there is no certainty about what lies ahead. The insufficient allocation of domestic resources to social protection, exacerbated with devastating austerity in a number of countries in recent years, has exacerbated financing challenges and austerity measures have often been based on advice and conditionalities from international financial institutions.

Governments must urgently move away from austerity measures and make use of the many options available to expand fiscal space for strengthening social protection, progressing towards human rights and stimulating an inclusive economic recovery. The establishment of the UN's Global Accelerator for Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions is a welcome development. However, strengthened international financing support is also critically needed to mobilise and coordinate financing assistance to countries with limited fiscal space, which is why unions and civil society have been calling for the establishment of a Global Social Protection Fund.

In this meeting, trade unions and civil society organisations will join forces, and discuss their priorities and campaign strategies for financing universal social protection at the domestic, regional and international levels.

Agenda

January 23	<u>Universal social protection: opportunities for action at the national and international levels</u>
14h00-14h15	Introduction and scene setter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alison Tate, Director of Economic and Social Policy, ITUC
14h15 – 15h30 PANEL I.	Financing universal social protection what is needed at the national and international levels? Introduction and moderation: Evelyn Astor , Economic and Social Policy Advisor, ITUC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • David Stewart, Chief of Child Poverty and Social Protection, UNICEF: Internationally agreed principles for financing social protection Background paper: USP2030 joint statement on financing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diego Gonzalez-Lopez, Development Coordinator, ITUC: Official Development Assistance and a Social Protection Fund Background paper: Expanding social protection and closing financing gaps: Case studies on ODA and social protection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Isabel Ortiz, Director, Global Social Justice: International financial institutions' policies on social protection Background paper: End Austerity: A Global Report on Budget Cuts and Harmful Social Reforms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diloá Bailey-Athias, Economist, Development Pathways: The role of progressive taxation for financing social protection Background paper: Investments in social protection and their impact on economic growth: tax financing options <i>Followed by open discussion</i>

15h30-15h45	Break
15h45-17h00 PANEL II.	<p>Universal Social Protection to achieve a recovery for people: Civil society organisations and trade unions in action</p> <p>Introduction and moderation: Koen Detavernier, Advocacy Officer, WSM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ajay Kular Rai, Chair, NETWON Nepal: Advancing social protection reforms in Nepal • Ghislaine Saizonou-Broohm, Coordinator for Equality and Social Protection, ITUC Africa: Implementing the African Protocol for Social Protection • David Acuña, President, CUT Chile: Financing social protection in Chile • Alexandra Arguedas, Regional coordinator for INSP!R Latin-America and Caribbean: Campaigning and networking for adequate social care services in the Dominican Republic <p><i>Followed by open discussion</i></p>
17h00-17h30h	<p>Moving forward & closing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bart Verstraeten, General Secretary, WSM

The working languages of this meeting will be English, Spanish, and French. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided.

Background material

INSP!R [The future of social protection: Vision and strategy on the right to social protection](#)

ITUC (2022) [Expanding social protection and closing financing gaps: A selection of country case studies](#)

Ortiz, I., Cummins, M. (2022) [End Austerity: A global report on budget cuts and harmful social reforms in 2022-25](#)

USP2030 (2022) [Joint statement: Principles for financing universal social protection](#)